

**II. Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A sample tab comprising [ ]:

a base plate having a top surface [ ] and a bottom surface, and at least a portion of said base plate adapted to permit transmission of electromagnetic radiation therethrough [ ];

a well disposed on said top surface of said base plate for retaining a sample, said well defined by a top surface of a section of said base plate and by a closed wall extending above said top surface of said base plate, and

a cover plate hingedly connected to said base plate, said cover plate having an open position allowing a sample to be introduced into said well and a closed position wherein a bottom surface of a section of said cover plate covers said well, wherein at least a portion of said cover plate permits transmission of electromagnetic radiation therethrough, so that when said cover plate is in a closed position an optical path is formed through said portion of said base plate that permits transmission of electromagnetic radiation, said well, and said portion of said cover plate that permits transmission of electromagnetic radiation.

Claim 2 (Cancelled).

3. (Currently Amended) The sample tab of claim ~~[[2]]~~ 1, wherein said closed wall extending above said top surface of said base plate comprises one, or more than one overflow ~~openings opening, and said closed wall is~~ surrounded by a containment wall, and where in said containment wall and said wall extending above said top surface of said base plate defining define an overflow ring channel therebetween.

4. (Currently Amended) The sample tab of claim ~~[[2]]~~ 1, further comprising a locking member ~~permitting for locking~~ said cover plate ~~to be attached~~ to said base plate when said cover plate is in said closed position.

5. (Currently Amended) The sample tab of claim 3, further comprising a locking member ~~permitting for locking~~ said cover plate ~~to be attached~~ to said base plate when said cover plate is in said closed position.

6. (Currently Amended) The sample tab of claim ~~[[4]]~~ 5, wherein said locking member comprises a circular ring ~~capable of for~~ frictionally engaging an outer portion of said containment wall when said cover plate is in said closed position, wherein said locking member is disposed on said cover plate.

7. (Currently Amended) The sample tab of claim 4, wherein said locking member comprises one, or more than one clips clip ~~capable of engaging for locking~~ said cover plate to said base plate in said closed position.

8. (Original) The sample tab of claim 4, wherein said locking member is on said cover plate, said base plate or both said cover plate and said base plate.

9. (Currently Amended) The sample tab of claim ~~[[4]]~~ 3, wherein said containment wall comprises a sealing member on its upper surface.

10. (Original) The sample tab of claim 9, wherein said sealing member is an O ring.

11. (Currently Amended) The sample tab of claim 9, wherein said sealing member is a pliable material integral with said containment wall.

Claims 12-13 (Cancelled).

14. (Currently Amended) The sample tab of claim ~~[[13]]~~ 5, wherein said ~~overflow~~  
~~ring containment wall~~ comprises a sealing member on its upper surface.

15. (Original) The sample tab of claim 14, wherein said sealing member is an O ring.

16. (Currently Amended) The sample tab of claim ~~[[15]]~~ 14, wherein said sealing member is a pliable material integral with said ~~overflow ring~~ containment wall.

Claim 17 (Cancelled).

18. (Currently Amended) The sample tab of claim [[12]] 5, wherein said locking member comprises one, or more ~~than one clips clip capable of for frictionally engaging and attaching~~ locking said cover plate to said base plate in said closed position.

19. (Currently Amended) The sample tab of claim [[12]] 5, wherein said locking member is on said cover plate, said base plate or both said cover plate and said base plate.

20. (Currently Amended) A method for sample analysis, comprising[[.]]:

- (i) adding a sample ~~to~~ into the well of said sample tab defined in claim 1,
- (ii) ~~and closing said cover plate of said sample tab so as to remove air bubbles from said well,~~
- (iii) ~~and inserting said sample tab within~~ into an instrument for analysis for analyzing said sample, and
- (iv) analyzing said sample.

21. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 20, wherein said cover plate comprises a locking member ~~permitting said~~ for locking said cover plate ~~to be attached to~~ said base plate when said cover plate is in said closed position.

22. (Original) The method of claim 21, wherein said sample is either a biological or a non-biological sample.

23. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein said sample is a semi-solid or a fluid sample.

Claims 24-26 (Cancelled).

27. (New) The method of claim 20, wherein in said step of inserting (step iii), said sample tab is placed in a horizontal position within a sample holder of said instrument, and wherein said sample is analyzed by projecting electromagnetic radiation through said well in a direction substantially perpendicular to the position of said sample tab.

28. (New) The sample tab of claim 1, wherein said wall extending above said top surface of said base plate is circular.

29. (New) The sample tab of claim 3, wherein said containment wall is circular.

30. (New) The sample tab of claim 29, wherein said wall extending above said top surface of said base plate is circular.

31. (New) The sample tab of claim 1, wherein at least a portion of said section of said cover plate is transparent or translucent and at least a portion of said section of said base plate is transparent or translucent.

32. (New) The sample tab of claim 1, wherein at least a portion of said section of said cover plate is transparent or translucent and at least a portion of said section of

said base plate is reflective.

33. (New) The sample tab of claim 1, wherein at least a portion of said section of said cover plate is reflective and at least a portion of said section of said base plate is transparent or translucent.

34. (New) The sample tab of claim 1, wherein said section of said cover plate is transparent or translucent and said section of said base plate is transparent or translucent.

35. (New) The sample tab of claim 1, wherein said section of said cover plate is transparent or translucent and said section of said base plate is reflective.

36. (New) The sample tab of claim 1, wherein said section of said cover plate is reflective and said section of said base plate is transparent or translucent.